RCC Bridge on Torsa River

1837. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that re-alignment of NH-31 from Falakata to Pundibari in Cooch Behar, West Bengal remains incomplete because of non-completion of a major RCC bridge on Torsa river;

(b) whether Government of West Bengal has forwarded a revised estimate seeking timely completion of the project;

(c) the steps that are being taken by Government to expedite the project; and

(d) the progress that has been made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Action has been initiated for seeking approval of the competent authority for the 2nd revised cost estimate for the project. Balance work can be taken up after sanction of 2nd revised cost estimate.

ISRO Agreement with Germany

1838. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ISRO would launch a 350 Kg. Italian scientific satellite "AGILE" as a long foreign satellite on its PSLV rocket this year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ISRO has made an agreement with a German Company in this regard; and

(c) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Antrix Corporation which is the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)/Department of Space has

entered into a contract with COSMOS International Satellitenstart GmbH, Germany in January 2004, to launch a scientific satellite "AGILE" belonging to the Italian Space Agency. The Satellite will weigh about 350 Kgs. and will be required to be placed in a near equatorial orbit at a height of about 550 klilometers with a specified accuracy, using Indian Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle from Sriharikota launch site. The launch is expected to take place towards the end of 2005 or beginning of 2006. The satellite is being built by an associate of COSMOS International Satellitenstart GmbH, Germany.

Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programme

†1839. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the target of poverty alleviation from the country can not be achieved merely by investing money in Plan implementation;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government have taken any action to make Plan implementation effective by improving the administration; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that the target of poverty alleviation can not be achieved merely by investing money in plan implementation. The reduction of poverty depends on a wide variety of factors, of which the government's anti-poverty plans and programmes are only one component. The Government has, therefore, adopted a three pronged strategy for reducing poverty; (i) acceleration of economic growth with a focus on sectors which are employment intensive (ii) human and social development through provision of basic minimum services; and (iii) targeted anti-poverty programmes.

(c) and (d) Government has taken action to alleviate poverty in rural and urban areas and to improve implementation.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.